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THE LIFE OF BROTHER MARTIN OF JESUS CRUCIFIED,

OF THE ORDER OF THE PASSIONISTS

Who died in the year of our Lord 1823.

(Continued from page 266.*)*

The regulation of life which he followed during his stay at Viterbo was this. Besides the entire and exact fulfilment of his duty to his employer, he assisted at mass every morning; and in the evening, when his work was finished, he invariably paid a visit to our Blessed Lady in a church at a little distance from his shop, or in another about half a mile from the town, called the church of the little grotto, in which was kept a devout image of the Blessed Virgin, discovered a short time before, carved in the stone of a little grotto. These were his innocent pastimes. On Saturday nights he returned to San Martino, not only to see his parents, but to attend more easily to his devotions, going to confession and communicating every Sunday. On the recurrence of any feast in Viterbo, as of St. Rose, &c., Fontarini used to beg of him to remain, and take part in the usual festivities; his father also gave him leave to remain and enjoy the feast; but the prudent young man, knowing how easy it is on such occasions to lose the grace of God, and what advantage our enemies have over us in such diversions, never would remain; and sometimes even when his father was in the town, and would have taken him to some of the shows, he never could be induced to accompany him; when he, imitating the example of holy Tobias, who, (Cum essit junior, nihil tamen puerile gessit in opere. Tob. 1.) whilst he saw the others running in crowds to worship the idols, he alone went to the temple to adore the Lord. Oh that we could find in every young person such an imitator of this holy patriarch, as was this young man! We should not witness so many disorders in thoughtless youth, and which unhappily increase with age.

It would appear strange that a youth of so much virtue and of such angelical habits, should be left in the world. So delicate a plant certainly needed to be transplanted by the celestial husbandman from the desert of the world to the garden of religion. His father, nevertheless, only thought of forming him for a secular state: God, however, had other designs over him. He had given him from his earliest years a great inclination for the ecclesiastical state; but James, seeing his desire frustrated, and that it was intended for him to learn the trade of tailor, he submitted to his father's wish, though he felt himself in a situation entirely opposite to his inclinations. He bore a holy envy of all young men that were devoted to the Church, and, sheltered from every storm, might attend wholly to the service of God. "O how happy you are, how happy you are," said he to one of them, "you may enter the ecclesiastical state, which I am not allowed to do!" He often said these words: "The Blessed Virgin will help me, for I am quite sure that no one who trusted in her prayers was ever deceived."

Up to this time his only desire was to serve God in the ecclesiastical state, but something more was required of him by the Almighty and our Blessed Lady; they wished him to renounce the world entirely, not only all affection to it, but in effect, that so poor and stripped of every thing, he might more closely resemble his divine Redeemer. When, therefore, he was least thinking of it, he felt himself inspired by God to become a Passionist. There was something most extraordinary in his call to this congregation, which he himself related to me; this, however, I remember about it, that he said he never felt, even in the commencement of his vocation, that sensible sweetness which is commonly experienced on such occasions, and from this I judged how great had ever been the purity of his heart. The reason appears evident; Almighty God conducts each one according to their several dispositions; therefore, when he calls one to abandon home, parents, honours, pleasures, who has attached himself to these things, it is necessary in the order of divine providence to make such a one taste some of the consolations found in his service, but which is not necessary when the heart is already detached from the things of this world. A mother who wishes her son to leave some diversion to come to her, tempts him with sugar plums, but to withdraw him from a tiresome occupation, her simple voice is necessary.

After this not entirely useless digression, let us return to James, who scarcely heard the voice that called him to our congregation, than he hastened to manifest the whole to his spiritual Father, who was a good religious instructor called Father Thomas. The good discreet father feared lest that this impulse might be merely a passing fervour, which many have

felt to become religious, but which being the effect of fancy rather than of grace, may consequently vanish as quickly as it came; like to some who, carried away by this indiscreet fervour, undertake, without consulting any but their own fancy, to lead a life to which they are not called; and find themselves as inexperienced mariners trusting in a passing pleasant breeze.

Father Thomas having frequently had acquaintance with such cases, used all possible means to ascertain if the vocation of this youth were really from God. He placed before his eyes the many difficulties he would have to encounter. "Be cautious," said he, "in the step you want to take; you wish to be a religious and a Passionist, but do you know what it is to be a Passionist? It means to be crucified to the world, living on earth as though you lived in heaven; it means the renunciation, not only of parents, goods, and pleasures, but what is most important, of self-will. Then you wish to be a religious, but how? in quality of lay-brother or clerical? Your father would not consent to your being a lay-brother, and how can you hope to be of the choir? already sixteen years of age, and only able to read your own language, whereas you must at least read Latin to be received as a choir religious among the Passionists. Were you to commence studying at present, besides the great inconvenience you would find in doing so at home, you would thereby retard your progress in the trade you are learning, and in case of the failure of your vocation you would have lost both your time and money."

These and such like were the difficulties which Father Thomas brought before him in the beginning, desirous of knowing what reply the youth would make to such opposition; but he, instead of losing courage at the sight of the difficulties, was even more desirous in consequence. He always answered that nothing was impossible to God, and that if he called him to that state of life, he would certainly give him the necessary graces to succeed in it; he confided not in himself, nor in any human succour, but solely in the aid of divine grace, and in the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. His confessor seeing him so resolute, believed that his was a true vocation, and, therefore, animated him to follow it; and offered to conduct him to Sant Angelo, there to be examined by the Father Provincial. In effect, he took him and presented him to the Provincial, who at that time was father Angelo Louis of St. Raphael. On seeing the youth so delicate looking, pale, and thin, he accosted him thus: "My son, our institute will never do for you; you are far too delicate, how would you be able to bear the severity of our rule?" Nothing daunted, the youth endeavoured to set aside these difficulties by the same reasons he had given to his director. Surprised at his courage and confidence in God, the Father Provincial began to give him some hopes; and examined him as to his studies, but found that he could not even read without spelling his words, upon which he said to him, "My son, you cannot be a lay-brother on account of your delicate constitution, and you are totally incapable of being a choir religious on account of your ignorance. How, then, could you think of being a Passionist?" Then Father Thomas took upon himself the care of instructing him, assuring the Provincial that he had thought of this obstacle; it was true that at present the boy was very ignorant, but being possessed of talent, he would, no doubt, improve much in a short time; all he wanted at present was to have some slight hope of the youth being received, and that he would be answerable for the rest. The Provincial yielded so far as to say a few words of encouragement to him, but would by no means give him any assurance of being received. "Study," said he, "and let me see you in a short time, then we will talk about it." It may easily be imagined the state of mind of the good youth after this interview, equally divided between hope and fear; however, with all this, he thought he had gained much by obtaining some little encouragement. There remained still a step to be taken which appeared even more difficult, that of making known his vocation to his father, and obtaining his leave to apply himself to the requisite studies. Father Thomas thought it better to take upon himself this duty, and so went in person to Vincent, and in the best manner possible informed him of the whole affair: the news was like a dagger to the heart of the poor father; till then he had had no other idea than that of forming his son to lead a good and holy life in the world. It is true he much wished (as he has since told me) to have a son a Passionist, but it never entered his head that his beloved James was to be that one. He felt great difficulty in granting Father Thomas what he asked, and wished to hear from his son if such were really his sentiments. Accordingly he questioned his son, and begged him to consider the difficulties he would have to encounter in the execution of such a design, insisting especially on the shame cast on so many who, having entered among the Passionists without a vocation, were obliged to return home, ridiculed by all their relations. He feared lest this should prove to be his case, particularly on account of his delicate constitution. However, the young man overcame his father's difficulties, as he had done so many others which had previously been proposed to him; and consequently, this prudent and cautious man would not another instant oppose his son's vocation.

St. Theresa, when she thought of the favours which she received from God in such abundance, used to humble herself the more, saying that our Lord supported her extreme weakness, and that the assistance which she received from God, showed how liable she was to fall, just as the walls of a house are shown to be in a tottering condition, when it is necessary to support them with buttresses.

Our divine Lord says, that he who would be greater than others, must first make himself less than they. This is a truth which all believe; how comes it then that so few Christians reduce it to practice?—*St. Vincent of Paul.*

THE MATERNAL CHARACTER OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

THE venerable abbot whom you are about to hear, reader, is the celebrated Guibert de Nogent, who was born in the year 1053 in the castle of Beaudaisis, and when you have heard him describe his mother, you will know in general what was the *maternal* character during the middle ages. "God of mercy and of sanctity, (says the abbot) I render thanks to thee for all thy benefits. And first, I thank thee for having granted me a beautiful, chaste, and modest mother, who was infinitely filled with the fear of thy name. As for her beauty, it is not altogether vain to speak of it. If Sallust had not thought that beauty alone, without morals, might be praised, he would not have said of Aurelia Orestilla that in her besides beauty, there was nothing to praise. And indeed, although an image in relation to faith is said by the apostle to be nothing, nevertheless that apt conformation of members is not undeserving of reasonable praise; for, although momentous beauty is mutable by the instability of blood, as every thing else of imaginary good, yet it cannot be denied to be good; for whatever is eternally instituted by God is beautiful, and whatever is temporally beautiful, is only as it were a mirror of that eternal beauty which has been witnessed when angels have appeared to men, and which will be seen in the bodies of the elect, when they are made conformable to the brightness of Christ in his transfiguration. I render thee thanks, O God, for having added to her beauty virtue. Thou knowest how thou didst impress her with the fear of thy name, which she found a remedy against all mental diseases; how she loved domestic retirement, and how careful she was not to condemn others who went much from home; and when, by strangers or servants, any fables of this kind were related, how she used to turn away, and endeavour by whispers to put a stop to them, being as much afflicted as if it were her own character that was called in question. The virtuous looks of my mother, the fewness of her words, and her constant tranquillity of countenance, were not made to embolden the lightness of those who saw her. It was far less from experience than from a kind of terror with which she was inspired from on high, that she learned to detest sin; she used often to tell me that she had so penetrated her soul with the dread of a sudden death, that, on coming to a more advanced age, she bitterly regretted that she no longer felt in her aged heart those same agitations of pious terror which she had felt in an age of simplicity and ignorance. In the eighth month after my birth, my father, according to the flesh, passed away. Although my mother was then in the brilliant lustre of her beauty, she resolved to remain a widow. What just examples of modesty did she then give! Living in an extreme fear of the Lord, and with an equal love for her neighbours, especially those who were poor, she governed us and our goods prudently. Her mouth was so accustomed to recal without ceasing the name of her deceased husband, that it seemed as if her soul had never any other thought; for whether in praying, or in distributing alms, or even in the most ordinary acts of life, she continually used to pronounce the name of this man, which showed that her mind was always occupied with him. She offered daily sacrifices for his soul, and gave just alms, and she often beheld him in visions, which, as they did not inspire her with any security, but merely excited her solicitude, must no doubt have come from God, and from those angels who have care of the dead. She was assiduous in repairing to the Churches, being never on the common occasions absent from the nocturnal offices. At her own expense, she maintained, with humble faith, a lamp perpetually burning in the Church of St. Ledger. She learned the seven penitential psalms by heart, not by reading, but by hearing them. She was universally venerated, and being much visited by noble men and women, on account of her amiable and gracious conversation, she used, when they went away, to have great scruples lest she should have uttered any less true or idle word. Thou knowest, O God, with what purity and holiness she brought me up, not sparing even to clothe my little body in the pomp of raiment, that I might seem to equal courtly or royal boys. Neither sleeping nor waking, did her solicitude for me ever cease. At length, on St. Gregory's day, she sent me to school to learn grammar, from a man who could not, indeed, teach me what he did not know himself, but from one who was most careful to preserve me in virtue. For with whatever was modest, with whatever was chaste, with whatever was part of exterior elegance, he most faithfully and lovingly imbued me. In after years, when I was elected abbot, thou knowest, O God, how much she was afflicted; for what others deemed a source of honour, was to her matter of intolerable grief; because she did not wish me to be exposed so young to so many dangers; especially knowing that I was ignorant of forensic things, having devoted myself exclusively to letters. One would have thought that the admonitions which she gave me on this occasion, and her predictions also must have come, not from an illiterate woman, but from a most learned bishop. When my mother at length was seized with her last illness, both my brother and I were absent at Nogent: God spared her tenderness and ordered all for the best. When my old master who had assumed the religious habit, weeping stood by her death-bed, and said, "Lo your sons are far away, and perchance you are grieved that you should die during their absence," she replied, looking on him fixedly, "Had they even remained within the adjacent cloister, God knows that I wish neither them nor any other of my relations to be present at my death. There is only One, whom with all my strength I worship; only One whose presence I desire now." The same night she departed, not ungratefully as we believe, to the embrace of her God.

Mores Catholici.

A soul is sometimes more raised towards perfection by humbly abstaining from excusing herself when wronged, than by hearing ten sermons: for when we do not excuse ourselves, we begin to learn wherein consists true liberty, and to possess a holy indifference to what is said about us, whether it be good or evil. Yea, by accustoming ourselves not to answer, we shall arrive at that pass, that when we hear ourselves spoken of, it will seem as though it were said of another, or as if it were a matter that referred not unto us, but wholly unto others.—*S. Theresa.*

When the abbot Moses was ordained priest, his bishop commanded his clergy, in order to try him, as soon as he should be brought up to the altar, to drive him back with marks of indignation, and to listen to what he said. They did so, saying at the same time, "Get you gone, unbeliever." But he meekly retired, uttering these words, "Alas! wretched sinner that I am, how should I, who am not worthy to be called a man, dare to take my place amongst men!"

S. Rose of Lima, on account of her singular piety, was often severely treated, and even cruelly beat by her mother and her brothers; but this humble little child always believed that she deserved even worse at their hands. Moreover, she not only never excused herself, but even exaggerated her failings, and represented them as greater than they really were, in order that people might not think she was dealt with too hard; and all the while she rejoiced at her injuries.

ISABELLA;

OR

THE HEROINE OF ALGIERS.

Continued from page 254.

CHAPTER II.

A HALT.

The first care of the merchant, on his arrival at Algiers, was to search out the vessels, which three months before had cruised about the roads of Genoa. He had the greatest difficulty in obtaining precise information; it was only after infinite trouble, and giving the most minute details respecting his father, that the merchant succeeded in clearing up the mystery which hung over the old man's place of retreat. He learned that he had been sold to an Arab, who lived three days' journey from Algiers, and had been charged with the care of his flower-garden, owing to his advanced age, which was unable to support a more laborious employment. He was given to understand that his ransom might be easily effected.

This intelligence filled the merchant and his wife with joy. They were impatient to leave Algiers and follow the trace of their father; but as they were unacquainted with the country through which they had to pass, they hired an escort of two Arabian horsemen. Isabella too leaped for joy, at the thought of seeing once more her ancient mentor. Oh! what things she had to say to him! How happy would she be to express her gratitude and love!

On leaving Algiers, its narrow streets, and its white houses, built like an amphitheatre, on the declivity of a hill, the travellers took a road, which following the windings of the land, presented a delightful and varied prospect. The air was perfumed with the sweet odour of the orange tree flower; the laurel, the olive, and a variety of other shrubs, now grouped together, now scattered, exhibited plots of verdure, which contrasted agreeably with the golden harvest; in a word, a luxuriant vegetation everywhere greeted the eye, for nature had poured forth with a liberal hand her gifts on the enchanted shores of the Mediterranean. Then too, to enliven the scene, there arose the soft harmony of the song of birds, of the shepherd's pipe, and the bleating of many flocks and herds; all of which recalled to the wayfarers sweet recollections of the valleys around Barcelona, where their feet once wandered, and the first spring of life smiled upon them.

The sea calm, and hardly ruffled by the gentlest breeze, stretched the vast mirror of its waves before their eyes, and seemed to invite mortals to entrust themselves to its tranquil waters. Isabella could not help expressing her delight at the beauty of the scene. "Alas!" her father said, "The sea, you now so much admire, conceals its treachery under the appearance of a calm, while a few moments suffice to unloose its fury to break down every thing before it, and engulph those who had entrusted themselves to its waves. It is a faithful image of human life, which at one time flows tranquilly on; at another, is disturbed by cares and sorrows, which are never far distant from peace and joy. The storms which arise in the moral world, are often more terrible than the tempests which stir up the depths of ocean. God permits this, as a constant lesson to us, to detach our thoughts from perishable objects, and to fix our hopes on more durable goods, which nothing shall ever be able to take from us. But these goods engage our attention the less, as they are to be enjoyed in a life to come, and the present alone flatters our fickle and inconsiderate hearts."

But the aspect of the country through which they were travelling, made a far deeper impression on his mind. At the sight of the riches which nature everywhere displayed, the merchant said within himself: "What a pity it is to see this fertile region in the hands of stupid Arabs, who will not move even a finger to second the efforts of nature! Here truly may we see the difference between the religion of Jesus Christ and that of Mahomet. Here the people vegetate in brutality, the women are slaves; every thing is governed by the course of a fatality in which all believe. These barbarians are addicted to piracy, and, like the wolf and the bear, live by rapine. They never hesitate to strip their christian brother of his liberty and goods, and drag him into captivity. But how happy was this land, when illumined by the light of the gospel! For on the soil of Africa sprung those mighty geniuses, whose works still remain to attest the superiority of the Catholic faith over the dreams of the Koran. Here flourished a Tertullian, a Cyprian, a Lactantius, an Augustine; further on, the waves seem still to murmur the names of an Origen, of a Clement, of a Cyril of Alexandria, of an Athanasius, and of that vast multitude of solitaries who peopled the deserts of Thebäis, and astonished the world by the heroism of their virtues. And now, this country, once so famous, is seated in the shadow of death! The true faith is extinguished; the crescent occupies the place of the cross; the prince of darkness has spread the shroud of ignorance over the sun of truth; civilization has disappeared, and barbarism rules over these countries, once the cradle of the arts and sciences. When will European nations cast an eye of pity on this land? When will they carry back to her, what she once bestowed upon them—not luxury and sumptuousness in the arts, but the religion of Jesus Christ, and the blessings of civilization? The Colossus which seems to terrify them, is not so formidable; its feet are of clay, though its hands are armed with iron?"

Thus reasoned the merchant, as he rode alone behind his wife and daughter. They were chatting together, and the two Arabs journeyed on in silence, apparently regardless of every thing around them.

Thus the first day passed very happily. About night-fall, the travellers came to a little wood, from

the bosom of whose trees rose the minaret of a little mosque, the most celebrated place of pilgrimage in that part of the country. Here were they to pass the night. One of the Arabs dismounted, fixed his lance in the earth and went away. The horse remained near the lance without moving, though he was not tied to it. The Arab glided into the dark mazes of the little thicket, returned a few moments after, and at the same time, the door of a building attached to the house opened.

A man of a venerable aspect stood upon the threshold; a thick white beard fell upon his breast; a long brown robe, fastened at his waist by a red girdle, covered him with its graceful folds. He was the marabout of the place, the priest of the temple, the oracle of the country. He saluted the wayfarers by thrice raising his hand to his beard, and signed to them to follow him. The merchant entered the inclosure without hesitation; Theresa and Isabella followed close after. "God is God, and Mahomet his prophet," said the marabout, as he led them through a walk, shaded by tall trees, planted in beautiful order. He then conducted them into a small room, sat down upon a mat, and invited his guests to place themselves near him.

"One of your guides has briefly explained to me the motives which induced you to undertake this journey; they are motives, which have prevailed upon me to invite you to pass the night in this asylum, where women do not usually enter. Such filial piety shall never be driven from the temple of the great prophet."

The merchant thanked him for his hopitality, and assured him, that his generosity was not exerted on ungrateful persons. The marabout smiled, but assuming his wonted gravity: "You are hungry," said he. "You are thirsty."

The merchant answered, that they would be very glad to partake of some refreshment.

Whereupon the marabout clapped his hands, and a negro slave presented himself to receive the orders of his master. He returned soon after, bringing dates, figs, various other fruits, cakes baked on the ashes; the juice of the citron, diluted with water from the rock, and sweetened with wild honey.

The travellers made a hearty meal; Isabella especially relished the delicious fruits placed before her. During the repast, the merchant made inquiries respecting his father.

"By the prophet," the marabout replied, "I have never heard your father spoken of. I have been here six and thirty years, and have never quitted this asylum, since my pilgrimage to Mecca, the holy city, where I was gladdened with the sight of the prophet's tomb. Though but a day's journey from Algiers, I am perfectly ignorant of what is going on there, nor do I wish to know. Men, such as I know them, fill me with disgust. I have often raised my voice against the impious war which the Mahometans wage on Christians, but my admonitions are slighted or forgotten. Passion blinds them; they wish to enrich themselves, and do not scruple to become the executioners of those who never did them wrong. Oftentimes I groan in my solitude over the consequences, which sooner or later, these cruelties will bring upon us. The thunder, which slumbers over the heads of these barbarians, for whom robbery and injustice have become a necessity, will strike them down and cut them off in their sins. The day of vengeance will come, and the chastisement will be proportionable to the enormity of the crimes."

The merchant was delighted to hear such language in the mouth of a Mahometan. He shook the marabout warmly by the hand, and congratulated him on the noble truths he had just spoken. "It is," replied the old man, "a law of eternal justice, which may never be violated with impunity. Nations, as well as individuals, have a term allotted to their evil deeds, and when that arrives, God strikes them with reprobation. It is written in the heart of man, that he must not touch what belongs to his neighbour; passion alone can efface this great maxim on which the safety and existence of families depend. I repeat, I proclaim these truths, to all who come to consult me; they listen, they say I am right, and still passion carries them away. Such is man! He is nought but weakness and contradiction, and his heart the abode of corruption. And this is the reason why I avoid the society of my fellow-men."

The more the merchant conversed with the marabout, the more certain was he, that he had read the books of our holy religion; and on putting the question to him learnt, that he had in his possession both the Old and New Testament, which he often perused, but which he was careful to conceal, that he might not compromise himself. The travellers had been two hours in the marabout's house, when he retired, under the pretext, that he had still many prayers to say. He ordered mats to be laid on the floor, for the merchant, his wife, and daughter, for them to sleep upon; and having wished them good night, entered the temple. Early in the morning, he called upon them; inquired if they had slept well, gave them a good breakfast, and prayed that God would prosper their journey.

[*To be continued.*]

For the love of God let us not make any account of those little trifles, which some people call wrongs, and insults; for indeed, with these foolish points of honour, we make ourselves like children building houses of straw. He who is truly humble, believes that he can be wronged in nothing. Certainly we ought to be ashamed of resenting any thing that may be ever said or done against us; for it is the greatest iniquity to be beheld in the world, that our Creator should support so many injuries from his creatures, and yet that we should resent even a little offensive word. Above all, let contemplative souls well mark, that unless they are seriously determined to forgive whatever outrages or injuries they may ever meet with, they cannot put much confidence in their prayers. Seeing that the soul, which God unites to himself by such deep contemplation, careth not at all for any of these things, nor feeleth either the being esteemed, or the contrary; nor whether people speak well or ill of her; yea, even honours and esteem give her more pain than insults and outrages.—*S. Theresa.*

ST. MARY'S PRIORY.

A TALE FOR THE TIMES.

CHAPTER VI.

From darkness, here, and dreariness
We ask not full repose,
Only be Thou at hand, to bless
Our trial hour of woes.
Is not the pilgrim's toil o'erpaid
By the clear rill and palmy shade?
And see we not, up Earth's dark glade,
The gate of Heaven unclose?

Christian Year.

We left Ethel Harding on the second Monday in Advent, going to her Catholic friends, full of hope and confidence.—We bring her before the reader again, in her own room at Mrs. Walton's, a week afterwards, making preparations for a journey; no longer full of hope and confidence—but dejected, care-worn, and harassed with anxiety. Ethel went on rapidly with her packing, but so mechanically, that when the maid who was assisting her asked her a question, she started, and was several moments before she could recall her wandering thoughts sufficiently to give an answer to the purpose. Just as all was done, Agatha entered with eye-lids swollen and a haggard cheek, to ask Ethel if she was ready to go down to breakfast. Ethel's face brightened directly, and assuming a lively tone of voice, she said she was happy to inform her that the labours of packing were over, and they descended to the breakfast-room together, Ethel laughing and talking all the while.

About an hour from that time Ethel was in a railway carriage, kissing her hand to Mrs. Walton, Agatha, and Miss Trevor, as they stood on the platform at the station, to take a last look at her.—In another minute the train was flying along, and Ethel, exhausted and pale, was leaning back in the carriage, and considering with terror the possibility of an accident occurring, and her soul being suddenly summoned before the tribunal of Almighty God, utterly unprepared, and in an agony of doubt and fear. And why was she here? And whither was she journeying? And what was the cause of her dejection? —We must digress a little to explain all this.

The reader may remember that she went with her Catholic friends to make a call in the country. It was at the house of a gentleman of large fortune, distinguished for devotion to the cause of Catholic truth. He was a convert, who had joined the Church nearly twelve years. He had been soon followed by his wife, in consequence of which most of their children were received into the Church at an early age. A more perfect model of a Christian family than Mr. Mowbray's it would be difficult to find. He himself united talent and energy to remarkable gentleness and humility. His wife was a most amiable woman, and they were blessed with two sons and three daughters, who were all that their parents could desire.—The eldest daughter had married early into an ancient Catholic family, eminent for piety, and was a happy wife and mother. The eldest son had received the high grace of a vocation to leave all for Christ's sake, and was studying preparatory to Holy Orders at —— College. This had been a grief to his mother, but independent of higher consolations—her trial was lessened by its sparing her parting with her younger son, who would have gone to sea had not his brother's resolution made him the heir.—Mr. Mowbray's house was an old picturesque building, standing in a well-wooded park. But it was by no means a fine place. There were a few good pictures, and some curious old carving, and good store of family portraits and faded tapestry—but the furniture was quite the reverse of sumptuous, and most of the modern contrivances to make life comfortable were wanting at Mowbray Court.

But those who have learnt to look upon both the pomps and the luxuries of life as dangerous to their spiritual health, will not miss such things, or if they do, will quickly resign themselves to the discomfort of doing without them. What attracted sight seers to Mowbray Court was the chapel, which was a perfect gem of Christian art. It was built on to the house by the greatest ecclesiastical architect who has appeared since the middle ages, as well as the library, with which it was connected by a sort of cloister. The stained glass, fittings, and decorations were magnificent; and the altar furniture, vestments, &c. were in the richest style and most perfect taste, and had been worked by Mrs. Mowbray and her daughters under proper direction. Mowbray Court was some distance from Workingham, and during the drive Mrs. Clonbrony said a good deal of the family, which disposed Ethel to look upon the Mowbrays, not only with respect, but with actual reverence. Their alms-deeds, humility, self-denial, and fervent devotion, were mentioned; and Mrs. Clonbrony described the various charities which Mr. Mowbray had founded, the persevering activity of the ladies in works of mercy, and the unworldliness, and love of retirement and prayer visible in the whole family, without anything like ostentation or self-righteousness. Ethel was charmed with all she saw, and it may be imagined that this visit was not without its influence on her mind. The next day she had an interview with a Priest, and was persuaded to contemplate making her abjuration sooner than she had intended. But Ethel's trial was not yet over.

At night, in the solitude of her own chamber, the tempter came, and her most distressing conflict began. —Thick clouds obscured every ray of heavenly light, doubts and fears of the most painful kind overwhelmed her, and there were moments when she dreaded this mental confusion and obscurity, ending in the total darkness of a dreary scepticism.—During these agonizing moments her only consolation was her crucifix.—With her streaming eyes fixed upon her Redeemer, she called to mind those mysterious and awful words uttered by God Himself, dying upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Oh words full of deep mystery to all! yet is some slight glimpse of your meaning revealed to those who have to endure the most bitter of all trials, doubts against faith, and temptations to despair! The Word made flesh was to drain the cup of human woe to its

very dregs; and is there any woe so overwhelming as the fear that we are forsaken by our Heavenly Father?—Throughout that miserable night Ethel Harding was tortured by this dreadful idea.—But hope came with the light of the sun, and Ethel rose free from the violent agitation which had riven her soul till sheer weariness had caused her to be overpowered with sleep. Still she was far from feeling easy and tranquil. Doubts and fears continued to haunt her, and she repented having committed herself so hastily. This feeling strengthened every day, till it was brought to a climax by a letter from Mrs. Raymond, enclosing one from the Vicar of Wilbury, setting before her the danger of proceeding rashly in a matter of such awful importance, and urging her strongly to retrace her steps and pause.—The result was Ethel's determination to leave Workingham for Wilbury, whither she was now proceeding in the train.

As she advanced southwards, she gradually got into a happier frame of mind. Her nervous fears gave way under the tranquillizing influence of her favourite writer à Kempis, whose "Imitation of Christ" and "Soliloquy of the Soul" she read throughout her journey. When she got upon the Great Western, the idea of soon seeing again the two persons she loved best in the world, took possession of her mind, and made her quite happy. She reached the station which was to end her journey (by rail) before *night* had begun, though not before daylight was quite gone. Mrs. Raymond was waiting for her, and in a few minutes all was arranged, and Ethel was seated in Mr. Raymond's carriage, alone with her friend, driving towards Wilbury Court.

After many expressions of joy at meeting, Ethel said: "It was most kind of you to come yourself, but I am afraid it was not very prudent for you to venture out after dark in such weather.'—"I am not afraid of night air in a close carriage, dear Ethel," said Mrs. Raymond; "besides, have you forgotten that I am quite well now? But I acknowledge it was not quite prudent in me to come this evening, for Mrs. Darrel and Martha are staying with us.'—"Oh! how unlucky!" exclaimed Ethel. "That tiresome woman!"—"Ethel!" said Mrs. Raymond, reprovingly, "you seem to forget that she is my husband's aunt."—"Well, I beg Mr. Raymond's pardon," said Ethel, "I shall not beg yours though, for I know you hate the sight of her."—"Ethel, your words give me great pain," said Mrs. Raymond. "I must have spoken very inconsiderately, in a most careless manner, for you to have supposed that I cherished such unchristian feelings towards any one. I must be more cautious for the future in speaking of others to you."—"No, no, pray do not punish my hasty sentence so severely," Ethel cried; "I could not bear *you* to be reserved with me. I promise you to try more than ever to cure this wretched habit of saying what comes uppermost."—"But, my dear child," said Mrs. Raymond, "you judge too rashly. You have utterly misunderstood me if you fancy I hate the sight of Mrs. Darrel. On the contrary, I am very willing for her to come to Wilbury, and would do all in my power to make her stay in our home agreeable to her."—"Ah! by way of penance for your secret aversion to her," Ethel said, playfully; "I will never say you hate the sight of her again, but you must not expect me to believe that you and your aunt are dear friends."—"I do not ask you to believe any such thing, Ethel," Mrs. Raymond replied; "but there is a good deal of difference between loving and hating."—"True," said Ethel, "but after all we ought to love every one."—"Of course we must," replied Mrs. Raymond; "we cannot help feeling more affection for some than for others, but we must aim at loving all, and prove our love for those we cannot esteem highly, not merely by praying for them to be changed, but also by showing them every kindness that lies in our power, and by not speaking evil of them, or suffering our minds to dwell on their defects."—"Ah! my dear sweet friend!" Ethel cried, kissing Mrs. Raymond's hand, "*you* may hope to attain to so high a degree of perfection, but *I* never can; at least, I could not hope it unless I were in a convent, and then it would be only because I should have no temptations to judging and speaking uncharitably."—"My dear Ethel," Mrs. Raymond said, "You know perfectly well that there is nothing that I could do which you could not do also, and that it is both your duty and mine to *aim* at the most perfect life, however much we may fear we shall never attain to it."—"I remember," said Ethel, "that St. Alphonsus says that there is no presumption in desiring to be a saint, and in fact that we ought to aim at nothing less.'—"And St. Teresa says," continued Mrs. Raymond, "that God requires of us only a good resolution, and that He will do all the rest Himself."—"Yes! but what a mighty thing is that 'good resolution,' taken in the sense St. Teresa meant," sighed Ethel.—"Do you remember the whole of that passage in St. Alphonsus that you alluded to?" Mrs. Raymond asked.—"I think I do," Ethel answered: "Do not be disturbed if you should fall a hundred times a day. Do always the same—repent—purpose to do better for the future with the help of God's grace; put all your trust in your Redeemer and be calm and easy. It is not pride even after many falls to hope to become a saint, but it would truly be pride to be discouraged and surprised, as if your resolutions had power to prevent your falling repeatedly. Only humble yourself the more; put still more confidence in God, and begin anew."—"Can anything be more encouraging?" Mrs. Raymond said. "And do you remember the chapter on the efficacy of prayer? 'Many complain that God does not bestow upon them the graces they desire, but God has more reason to complain that they do not pray for them, and thus close His hands, which he would otherwise open to bestow benefits upon them, as he desires to do.'"—"Ah!" cried Ethel, "that is the very difficulty. I cannot pray *with confidence*, and that is one of the conditions of being heard." "But why not, my dearest Ethel?"—"Because I am so afraid that I am committing mortal sin in remaining out of the One true Fold, and that God turns from my prayers in wrath."—"Ah, Ethel, do not give way to that feeling!" Mrs. Raymond answered. "It must be wrong. Are you not sincerely desirous of accomplishing the will

of God at any cost?"—"I hope so," Ethel sighed out. —"And are you not now staying out of what you believe to be the One Fold, not from any worldly motive, but solely to avoid rashness, and to give the subject all the time which a step of such awful importance deserves?"—"Yes! that is, I believe and hope so!" said Ethel, with another sigh.—"Then how can you suppose that God will refuse to listen to your prayers, even if you should be making a mistake in remaining out of the Fold? it is the *motive* Almighty God looks at, not the action. You know there is such a thing as doing good actions with a mixed motive, which destroys their merit; and also, of doing right things at a wrong time. You understand what I mean, dear?"—"Perfectly," Ethel replied, pressing her friend's hand. "But I will tell you what my fear is. I am afraid my *motive* is not so pure as you imagine. I fear it is one of those *mixed* motives which you alluded to. I know I make idols of you and Mr. Temple, and I am afraid I have sacrificed my plain duty for the sake of being with you." Mrs. Raymond did not answer immediately; she was obliged to make an effort to force back the tears which were ready to gush forth. At last, she said in a calm, steady tone: "You are deceiving yourself, Ethel. I know enough of you to be certain that if you were *quite sure* that it was the will of Almighty God for you to separate yourself for the rest of your life from those nearest and dearest to you, you would not hesitate an instant between duty and feeling. You would make the sacrifice firmly, cost what it might."—"*I* am not so sure of that," Ethel said, sorrowfully. "If it were possible for an Anglican convent to be founded, with you for its Superior and Mr. Temple for the Director, and you were to urge me to join you, I know very well that I could not resist the temptation to secure to myself a home so congenial to my feelings and taste, in spite of my serious doubts as to whether it is safe for me to stay another six months in the Church of England." There was another pause, for Mrs. Raymond was doubtful what answer she ought to make. At last Ethel said: "How is Mr. Temple? You said nothing of his health in your last two letters."—"His chest continues very weak," Mrs. Raymond replied. "He is going to Torquay immediately, and I hope he will be persuaded to go abroad if he continues in his present state."—"Going away immediately!" cried Ethel; "Oh! this is a trial I did not expect. And in so delicate a state! Oh! why did you not prepare me for this?" A violent fit of weeping prevented Ethel from saying more, and Mrs. Raymond's eyes filled with tears, but she swallowed them, and replied in the calmest and quietest manner: "Mr. Temple is not alarmingly ill, my dear Ethel; I believe he wants change of scene quite as much as change of air. He has had a good deal to harass him of late, and if he would have rest and quiet he would probably soon get well."—"Oh! may God grant it!" Ethel said, fervently; "but is it not hard on me, when I came here on the understanding that I was to have him for my director?"—"Why, surely he did not engage to guide you!" said Mrs. Raymond, "you must have misunderstood his letter."—"He did not promise anything," replied Ethel; "but I took it for granted, as he urged my leaving Workingham immediately."—"I begged him to do so," Mrs. Raymond replied, "in order to prevent your being hurried over; but I doubt whether he would have brought you here unless he had been on the point of leaving Wilbury."—Ethel's tears flowed afresh.—"How unkind! How unfriendly!" she murmured. "I have begun to think for some time past that Mr. Temple is becoming very hard-hearted."—"You wrong him, Ethel," said Mrs. Raymond, with more warmth than she usually showed. "There is no person gentler or kinder, no person with deeper and more lasting feelings; but when people reject his advice, and he sees that his words have no effect, it is not to be expected that he should go on wasting his time upon them."

Ethel's distress increased. "Oh, Mrs. Raymond! this from you!" she said. "I am sure I was obedient a long time. And when I have given up my own judgment so entirely now, and have left the path I feel sure was the right one, in order to follow Mr. Temple! How unjust! How unfair!" and a passionate burst of tears followed her words. "My dearest Ethel," Mrs. Raymond said, taking her hand soothingly, "do try and be calmer. You must not let yourself be hurried away by passion in this way. I am not blaming you. I do not consider that you are bound to follow Mr. Temple or any other fallible man. I have not done so myself on many points. But I wish you to see that it is unreasonable in you to expect Mr. Temple to advise *at all*, those who refuse to follow his advice *implicitly*. You cannot fail to remember, that both you and I persisted in a course that Mr. Temple disapproved of last summer. I knew very well that he disliked my calling on the Hungerfords, and still more, my getting intimate there, and taking you over. You cannot have forgotten that week we spent at Hungerford castle, and my being persuaded to stay over Ascension day, and be present at the services in the chapel, instead of returning home to keep the festival in our own parish church. That was entirely my fault, for *you* were very uneasy at the idea of doing what you knew Mr. Temple would disapprove of. Still you did not make any serious opposition, or I should have given up the plan rather than have obliged you to do violence to your conscience. And afterwards, during our tour in Somertshire, you were as eager as I was to visit the colleges and convents, and to attend the services, though you never went to one without telling me that you felt you were committing an act of disobedience to Mr. Temple. I blame myself exceedingly for acting so inconsistently and inconsiderately, and you may justly charge me with having led you astray; but you must acquit Mr. Temple of any thing like harshness or injustice when you remember all this." "But he ought to have spoken more decidedly," said Ethel: "if he had blamed and warned in plainer language we should not have acted as we did." "He could not very well, dear," said Mrs. Raymond. "There are many reasons, as you know, for his feel-

ing very scrupulous about interfering in Mr. Raymond's house, or appearing to exercise any control over my actions." "True," said Ethel, "I forgot that. He is in a false position. How the absence of confession in the Church of England cramps her pastors, and prevents their exercising proper control over their flocks, and in fact puts a complete stop to the High Church system working well in every day life!" Mrs. Raymond replied only by a sigh, and fearing they were getting on dangerous ground, she said, "Mr. Temple's curate has been at Wilbury for the last week. Mr. Albany is to remain just as he was. It is his own wish; and an old friend of Mr. Temple's is to live at the vicarage and take the lead." "I wonder why that should be," said Ethel. "Mr. Merton, the new curate," Mrs. Raymond replied, "is a middle aged man, with a family." "Oh, then, of course they are to live in the vicarage-house," said Ethel; "but I am surprised at Mr. Temple's choosing a *married man* to take his place!" "Mr. Merton must have married very early," replied Mrs. Raymond, "long before the Anglo-Catholic movement began. His eldest daughter must be near five and twenty, and he does not look more than fifty." "Poor man," said Ethel; "I dare say he has repented his marriage by this time. What is Mrs. Merton like?" "The family have not arrived yet. They are to come next week." "But how comes it he has no living?" asked Ethel; "he has been singularly unfortunate." "Oh there are many in his position," was the reply. "His early marriage cost him his right to a college living, and I suppose he had no family interest." "It is a good name too," said Ethel; "but that is nothing now-a-days. Merton! Now I wonder whether he is any relation to the Miss Merton I used to see at Workingham. She was a convert, and I think the niece of a Protestant clergyman. She was Mrs. Clonbrony's companion, and a very pleasing person." "You will soon have an opportunity of finding that out," said Mrs. Raymond. "And now, dear Ethel, I want to warn you, and to instil a little prudence into you. Do set a watch before your lips every day and all day, and say as little about Workingham as you can—I mean about your Roman Catholic friends. And never say a word against Protestantism before Mr. Raymond or the Darrels, or any body else if you can help it." "Oh! surely I need not be so guarded with Mr. Albany?" said Ethel. "It will be dreadful not to say a word about church matters to him." "Well I advise you not to," said Mrs. Raymond, "for his sake as well as for your own and mine." "But if he should ask me anything?" said Ethel. "I do not think he will," returned her friend; "because Mr. Temple has advised him not to do so, and he has the spirit of obedience in a much greater degree than you or I have." "Oh, that is very hard," said Ethel; "because I know he hears from Oxford every week, and should like to know how things go on. They have been foretelling a crisis for the last two years or more, and really one event does seem to follow another there in such a rapid way, that one may hope something decided will happen before long." "Oh, you may ask him his Oxford news," said Mrs. Raymond. "What Mr. Temple would object to, would be your talking of the things and persons you have seen at Workingham, and drawing comparisons." "Mr. Temple pays his own church a great compliment certainly," said Ethel, in her most sarcastic tone, "if he is so afraid to let the Anglican and Roman systems be compared." "Perhaps he would not be afraid if they were compared *fairly*," said Mrs. Raymond; "but the Church of England is *at present* in such a sad state." "When was she ever better, my dearest Mrs. Raymond?" asked Ethel: "in the days of her pious founder, king Harry? or in the reign of Cranmer the persecutor, or under Elizabeth and Jewell, those two contradictory rulers of the *transition* church? or under the Stuarts, with all the miseries of penal laws and puritanism? or under the Orangism of king William, or the Latitudinarianism and Socinianism of the succeeding reigns? What period shall we choose for the golden age of the Church of England?" "Ah, Ethel," said Mrs. Raymond, "let us speak of other things. You know well enough that I hated the Reformers before you did. We must shut our eyes to our Mother's faults. Would you call a daughter or a wife *dutiful*, if she excused disobedience and disrespect to a father or a husband because they were not what they ought to be?" "If a father or a husband ordered me to break God's commands," replied Ethel, "it would be my plain duty to disobey them." "Yes, if one were quite sure it was a divine command; "but one is to be obedient and respectful as long as one can." "Well, I mean to try," said Ethel, "but I protest against considering the Church of England as more than a step-mother, and a very weak and injudicious, as well as harsh and negligent step-mother too." "At any rate keep that opinion to yourself for a while, my dear child," said Mrs. Raymond. "Patience, and caution, and reserve,—let that be your motto for the present, and trust to almighty God to give you light, and to raise up to you, *in His own time*, a guide, a priest, a prophet, whomsoever He will."

Ethel's reply was to press Mrs. Raymond's hand to her lips, and cover it with kisses. Both remained silent for some time, and they journeyed onward, absorbed in their own thoughts, Ethel with one hand covering her eyes and brow, whilst the other remained passively between both of Mrs. Raymond's. At last a large tear which had long been standing on Mrs. Raymond's long black eye-lashes, fell heavily on the hand she held pressed within her own, and Ethel starting from her reverie, threw herself into her friend's arms, and said, "Do not be unhappy about me, my dear darling Mrs. Raymond. I am happier than I have been for many days, and I think I shall have grace to be patient and resign myself to my present trial, and cease to be one of those

> 'Who pray for sharpest throbs of pain
> To ease them of doubt's galling chain.'"

She paused, and after a few moments of silence recited in a calm and steady voice,

> "Unwise I deem them, Lord, unmeet
> To profit by thy chastenings sweet;

For thou wouldst have us linger still
Upon the verge of good or ill,
That on thy guiding hand unseen
Our undivided hearts may lean,
And this our frail and foundering bark
Glide in the narrow wake of thy beloved ark.

So be it, Lord: I know it best,
Though not as yet this wayward breast
Beat quite in answer to thy voice,
Yet surely I have made my choice;
I know not yet the promised bliss,
Know not if I shall win or miss;
So donbting rather let me die,
Than close with aught beside, to last eternally.

Christian Year.

A DRUID ROCKING-STONE.

One of the many charming walks from Monmouth is to a famous Druid rocking-stone, called The Buckstone, which stands on the edge of a high hill in the midst of a thick wood, crowning the highest point of an extensive down or moor. We crossed the pretty bridge over the Wye, and, leaving the emerald meadows through which it winds to the right, ascended the opposite hill, part of which is laid out in walks through a pine grove, and, as we *fortunately* took the wrong path, we were led, by thus trespassing, into some beautiful grounds belonging to a charming villa, placed conspicuously so as to command an extensive view of the delightful country beneath: we were soon directed into the right road, avoiding that which led to the Kymen, a fine hill covered with wood, and rendered more remarkable than nature has made it by its beauty, from a building which glares on the very summit, and which the taste of the inhabitants of Monmouth has directed them to paint white. We continued for several miles to wind along a steep and most beautiful road made through the very heart of a large wood, from openings in which we could every now and then catch extensive views, and perceive the glittering river winding its joyous way far below us. We met several peasants, who still pointed forward when we inquired for the object of our pilgrimage. Hitherto the weather, though somewhat cloudy, had been propitious; the air was soft and balmy, and the banks and hedges were full of bloom and fragrance, while a thousand coloured wild flowers, and exquisitely shaped leaves of every changing tint, sprung up in our path, inviting us to linger and repose; for the ascent, though pleasant, was very steep. A few drops of rain warned us to hasten on, and we soon struck into another wood-path, which, we were told, would conduct us at once to the Buckstone. This charming tangled brake was like a wall to climb; and with much scrambling, while the rain pattered through the thick leaves, we got to the end of it, and found ourselves on the moor—a wide down covered with heath, blue bells, and wild thyme. A venerable peasant, with a wood-knife in his hand, saluted us as he passed, looking wistfully at the clouds. He offered, on our asking his advice, instantly to go with us to the stone, of which he seemed extremely proud, assuring us it was the greatest wonder of all the seventeen counties which we could see from that hill on a clear day. After a few turnings, we came upon an open space, where, perched upon a pointed base, stood the gigantic Buckstone, tottering, as it would seem, over a precipice below. We sat on the seat of the arch-druid to contemplate it, while our guide descended by a few roughly-hewn steps, to prove to us, that it could really be moved by a very slight exertion. He placed his shoulder against an angle, and the huge mass waved gently to and fro. There is something very startling in these wizard-altars, which rest on a space apparently not larger than would be required by a bird, and yet have stood for countless ages in their place. We remained some time alone with this mysterious object, till the increasing gloom and the more frequent drops reminded us that we had some miles to walk before the bridge over the Wye at Monmouth would terminate our stroll.—*Bentley's Miscellany.*

THE ILLUMINATIONS OF ST. PETER'S.

BY RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, ESQUIRE.

First Illumination.

Temple! where Time has wed Eternity,
How beautiful Thou art, beyond compare,
Now emptied of thy massive majesty,
And made so fairy-frail, so fairy-fair:
The lineaments that thou art wont to wear
Augustly traced in ponderous masonry,
Lie faint as in a woof of filmy air,
Within their frames of mellow jewelry.—
But yet how sweet the hardly-waking sense,
That when the strength of hours has quenched those gems,
Disparted all those soft-bright diadems—
Still in the Sun thy form will rise supreme
In its own solid clear magnificence,
Divinest substance there, as now divinest dream.

Second Illumination.

My heart was resting with a peaceful gaze,
So peaceful that it seemed I well could die
Entranced before such beauty—when a cry
Burst from me, and I sunk in dumb amaze:
The molten stars before a withering blaze
Paled to annihilation, and my eye,
Stunned by the splendour, saw against the sky
Nothing but light—sheer light—and light's own haze.
At last that giddying Sight took form—and then
Appeared the stable vision of a crown,
From the black vault by unseen Power let down,
Cross-topped—thrice girt with flame:—
Cities of men,
Queens of the earth! bow low—was ever brow
Of mortal birth adorned as Rome is now?

Reflection.

Past is the first dear phantom of our sight,
A loadstar of calm loveliness to draw
All souls from out this world of fault and flaw,
To a most perfect centre of delight,
Merged in deep fire;—our joy is turned to awe,
Delight to wonder. This is just and right;—
A greater light puts out the lesser light,—
So be it ever—such is God's high law.
The self-same Sun that calls the flowers from earth
Withers them soon, to give the fruit free birth—
The nobler Spirit to whom much is given
Must take still more, though in that more there lie
The risk of losing all;—to gaze at heaven,
We blind our earthly eyes;—to live we die.

CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS, AND IT SHALL RETURN TO THEE IN MANY DAYS.

The following story is an illustration of the truth, that the Almighty always rewards the good action, and never forsakes those that trust in Him.

A poor young woman in the town of Metz, having lost her husband soon after marriage, was obliged to go into service to support herself. She found a situation with an English Catholic lady, who had come there in order to consult an eminent physician of the town, celebrated for his success in curing the complaint which was threatening her life. Marie was so gentle, so good and faithful, that Mrs. Johnson very soon appreciated her as she deserved, and finding that she was about to become a mother, instead of parting with her, she made every preparation for her being well cared for in her own house, promising to stand godmother to the expected stranger. Marie Bernis was sincerely attached to Mrs. Johnson, and regarded this promise as a boon in store for her infant, not that her mistress was rich, for her means were very limited, but because she was truly pious, for Marie knew that the prayers of the righteous avail much, and that mines of yellow dust are worthless in comparison with the least spiritual grace. She trusted that her child, presented to God by one who loved and feared Him, would through the efficacy of her prayers become wise and virtuous.

At length she gave birth to a healthy boy, and it was necessary to find a godfather also. Mrs. Johnson was a stranger in Metz; she knew several English, but they were not Catholic, and she could think of no better scheme than asking her physician to stand godfather. He refused in the most polite and civil manner, and she was as much at a loss as ever.

The following morning she went as usual to hear mass, and chanced to kneel down by a man whose appearance denoted poverty it is true, but also extreme cleanliness and neatness. He heard the mass with calm, simple, yet intense devotion, and the thought struck Mrs. Johnson, "Surely this person would be a suitable godfather for the child." After a little consideration she addressed him, and explaining the circumstances, the man willingly consented.

The child was baptised next day. The stranger was indeed poor, but he would nevertheless present a gift to his little godson, and drawing from his pocket a silver medal which he had brought from Spain (for he was a soldier), he hung it round the infant's neck saying, "This medal, which bears the image of the Blessed Virgin, has saved me in many dangers, I trust that it will equally preserve this little creature from all that could hurt, for no one ever had recourse to Mary without obtaining her powerful aid. I will never see you again little innocent, but the heavenly eyes of your mother Mary will never close on you." He departed, with much difficulty accepting from Mrs. J—— a little sum of money which she was happy in being able to give.

Two years were passed—Mrs. Johnson had returned to England, and Marie supported herself and little Pierre by her skill in embroidery; she lived in a small cottage in a neighbouring village, and never went abroad except to church, or to carry home her work.

The invasion of 1814 took place, and brought with it fears and alarms. The cottage of Marie, though near the town, was in an unprotected situation, and hearing the roaring of cannon in the country, and seeing her neighbours flee, she resolved to join some friends who dwelt in the city, hoping that they would afford her protection until the danger was passed. She borrowed a little car, and soon packed up all she possessed.

Pale and trembling, pressing the little Pierre close to her bosom, she timidly pursued her way, urging on the donkey that drew the car to its utmost speed. They had nearly reached the gates of the town, when a ball tore the flesh from her arm, and would have pierced the bosom of her infant, but striking against some hard substance, it rebounded and left the child unhurt.

The mother fancied her child was killed, and dropped down in a swoon; but soon recovered by the cries of the frightened Pierre, she opened his dress and found the gift of his godfather, the medal of the Blessed Virgin, indented with the ball that otherwise would have killed her child! Falling on her knees she poured out her gratitude to that sweet Mother whose eyes never close on the children of her love.

But the agony of that moment had been too much for her strength, her nerves received a shock which they never recovered. She continued to work, for otherwise she could not have supported herself and child, but her pale countenance and trembling hands, showed how unfit she was for her labours. Struggling with her increasing weakness, she continued to toil on, until Pierre had attained his eighth year, when an attack of fever rendered all future efforts impossible. Misery stared them in the face—misery from which her heart recoiled, until little Pierre whispered, "Dear mamma have you forgotten our Mother in Heaven?" and taking his bruised medal from his neck he held it to his mother's lips, and joy and confidence returned to her soul. By selling some little article of their furniture, they were able to live on a little longer; but when all was nearly sold, there was no help for it—Pierre must go and beg. The high spirit of the boy made this a terrible trial for him, until he remembered how his Saviour had humbled himself for love of him, and when he thought of this he was pleased to suffer his little humiliation also.

The charity of the neighbours, the kindness with which they received little Pierre, but above all, the watchful eye of his heavenly Mother, preserved this poor family, and sustained them in their hard trial, which lasted several years; for, although Pierre was always willing to run errands for his benefactors, or do any work his feeble strength fitted him for, yet it was their charity that mainly contributed to the support of him and his mother.

At length it happened one day in the middle of

summer that the boy, returning from a distant cottage to which he had been sent, found himself overpowered by heat and fatigue as he passed the parish church, and sat down under the shade of the porch to rest himself. A pedlar, in similar circumstances with Pierre, had also taken shelter from the heat and oppressive closeness of the atmosphere, and was sound asleep on the steps, his bundle of merchandize resting against the wall. A thunder storm was approaching—heavy rain drops began to fall, and the pedlar's wares lay in a position to receive the rain that now began to pour down from the roof of the porch. "This poor man's goods will be spoiled," said Pierre to himself, "unless they be moved, and he seems so tired I should be sorry to awaken him." Then getting up, he managed to move the load a little out of the way, and as a farther precaution he took off his blouse and threw it over the merchandize, after which, he sat down to await the owner's awakening. This was not long of happening, for the roar of the thunder might have awoke the seven sleepers themselves.

When the man saw the precautions the child had taken to preserve the property of a stranger, he felt too much interest in him to part without knowing more, and as the storm lulled for a moment he took the opportunity of retreating into a small public house, where he insisted the boy should accompany him. He then called for the best the house afforded, and a grilled fowl and some nice slices of bacon soon assailed little Pierre's nostrils with their tempting odour. "Oh if my poor sick mother were here," thought he, "surely she could eat some of this nourishing food!"—"Fall to, little man," said the stranger, "this would tempt an old appetite, far more a young one." But Pierre could not eat—he, a healthy strong boy, devour what would give new life to his sick mother!

"What's the matter with the child?" said the stranger; and Pierre overcome with bashfulness and tender love for his mother, burst into tears! He was, however, persuaded to speak out, and a tear glistened in the stranger's eye as he promised his mother should be cared for if he would eat quietly and be merry like a lad of his age. Reassured by the frank manners of his entertainer, Pierre's heart opened, and a glass of the wine of the country made him talkative, so that the stranger had but a few questions to ask before the boy had told him his whole history. "I have never seen my godfather," Pierre continued, "but it was the medal he hung round my neck that saved my life!" The man's attention seemed awakened. "A medal," he said, "do you wear it now? show it me." Pierre pulled out his battered medal, the stranger looked at it carefully and then said, "The ways of providence are admirable! embrace me, my dear boy, I am your godfather." They were soon seated beside Marie Bernis, and Paul Dupont related how it was owing to the forty francs given him by Mrs. Johnson that he had got on in the world. "I bought a little store of merchandize," he said, "and went about the country selling my wares; God blessed my endeavours, and I have always been able to gain a comfortable livelihood. But see," he continued, "how our Blessed Mother watches over us; I recognize my godson by her medal just at the moment I can be useful to him; I have lately fallen heir to a small patrimony that will keep me above want, so I shall dispose of my goods at a neighbouring fair, and with the proceeds set you up in a little shop. With Pierre's help you will manage it nicely, and I trust that want will henceforward be a stranger to your dwelling."

The good Paul arranged every thing for his friends before he left them. Marie regained her strength in some measure, and Pierre was a happy boy when, shutting up his little shop, in a summer evening he accompanied his mother to the church to pay their afternoon visit to the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Time passed on—the boy of twelve was now a young man of twenty-four; he had prospered in his his little business, and had lately opened a shop in the city of Paris itself. His devotion to his heavenly Mother had grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, and Pierre would have no sign above his shop door but the image of his Virgin Mother. "All will go well with me," he said, "if she be there to watch over my going out and coming in."

They had seldom heard of good Paul Dupont. The boon of the penny postage had not been conferred on la belle France, and her peasantry had little temptation to become men of letters.

Marie Bernis had become quite paralytic, but happy in her son, she enjoyed her seat in an easy chair, from which she could watch him serving his customers. One fine summer day her chair was placed near the shop door, that she might have the pleasure of basking her old limbs in the sun, when a poor cripple, old and sickly, approached and craved charity in the name of the Mother of Love. His voice, though feeble and broken, seemed familiar to her, his features though sharpened by want, were not altogether strange—"surely—surely it cannot be—yes it is Paul—Pierre, come hither—it is Paul Dupont"..... it was even so! The lightning had burned his barns, a murrain had destroyed his flocks, and he, suffering from old wounds, had come to Paris, to gain, if possible, admission into the hospital for Invalids—but he did not succeed, and he had spent his last penny in the journey, when wandering disconsolate through the streets, his eye rested on the image of the Blessed Virgin, and whispering the prayer of St. Bernard, "Remember, O most pious Virgin Mary, that it has never been heard of in any age that those who implored Thy powerful protection, were abandoned by Thee," &c. &c. He limped forward on his crutches and asked charity in the name of the Mother of Love.

Need we say he found a home—need we say he found a son who lavished his tender cares equally on his mother and godfather, and contributed to their happiness and comfort while they lingered on earth.

M. L.

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